



because we can't afford everything, but I want to afford what makes us more effective.

A second part of servant leadership is to have our Corps' professionals recognized for the wonderful work they do. Although we may not be able to get every individual in the media, I hope to get the fruits of your labor in the public eye in a positive light. That leads me to the second area I'll work on, communications.

Our fellow citizens need to know about the good work we do. You already know that we do good things for our nation that no one else can do. So we'll tell people what we do, how we do it, and show them our professionalism. We'll get the news out—the right news out—the whole news out. We owe this to ourselves. Moreover, since we are a public agency, we owe it to the public that we serve. Good government is transparent government. It is scrutinized by the people it serves. I welcome that scrutiny, but I want to get the correct information to the public so they can form an accurate opinion of what we do. In a nutshell, I want the District to continually be ahead of the “information bow wave.”

A Marine friend once told me, “If you see a microphone, say something into it. If you see a camera, stand in front of it.” My information efforts may not be that extreme, but I will welcome those opportunities because I plan to correct misinformation and push the positive things we do for our country.

Finally, I will address partnerships. It makes good business sense for us to enter into partnerships with local and state agencies. We would do it even if public law didn't encourage it. So we'll continue and expand on these important relationships. In another vein, I would like more members of the environmental communities to become our partners. I believe the Corps and the environmental communities can accomplish more working in concert than they can in opposition, and I will welcome those opportunities. The Corps' environmental efforts have come a long way in the last few decades, and I think we can be personally and professionally proud of that. However, we still have a long way to go in this regard.

While Robert E. Lee could contribute to the District's mission by surveying the rapids near Rock Island in the 1830s, I'm no surveyor. My single most important function is to prepare this organization to thrive in the future, building upon our past successes and our proud heritage—no matter what that future looks like.

I hope that in 2010 someone will say, “You know old Colonel what's-his-name did some good things for us.” 🇺🇸



**Check out Col. Bayles' recent Town Hall at:**

[www.mvr.usace.army.mil/PublicAffairsOffice/CommandSpeeches/TownHall7-2000.ppt](http://www.mvr.usace.army.mil/PublicAffairsOffice/CommandSpeeches/TownHall7-2000.ppt)

## Preparing for the Future

By Col. William Bayles, District Engineer

**M**y welcome to the Quad Cities was an experience I won't forget. The people of the Rock Island District have been extremely friendly and helpful. I know my family and I will enjoy our time here immensely. I was struck by the extreme sense of professionalism and know-how of everybody I've met so far. I really stand in awe of all the employees in the District.

As I outlined in the “Town Hall” during my first week, I have been planning my contribution to our District for nearly a year. I concluded that I can best serve our nation and the District by posturing us for success in the future. That future is bearing down on us with increasing rapidity, so we must start preparing now. Three areas I have chosen to work on are: servant leadership, communications and partnerships.

Servant leadership is simply the “boss” going to work for the employees to make their efforts more effective. I'm thinking a lot about the tools that we have and how we can best use these tools to make ourselves more efficient and productive. That includes everything from business processes and training to new equipment. I really believe everyone will do the very best job they can with the resources our nation provides. It's our District's leadership's job to get the best tools or other resources we can afford for you.

What are your resource needs? What ideas do you have for improving our products? I want to know. Everyone has something to offer. The experts are the ones that are close to the work, so I want to find out about your work, and I want to meet you while you're doing it. It's that insight that is invaluable





Jo Mackey PHOTOGRAPHY

(Left) Sean and Brenton McGrath give a “skier’s” thumbs-up as they prepare to lift out of the water.

(Below) Team members from Mississippi Challenge lock through Lock 21 near Quincy, Ill.

## Aussie Skiers Set World Record

By Mark Kane

**O**n June 27 at 9 a.m., Australian brothers Sean and Brenton McGrath coasted into Locks and Dam 15. They were two days and 400 miles into their record-setting water-skiing trek that started in Minneapolis on June 26 and ended 1,819 miles later on July 2 at the mouth of the Mississippi River, the Gulf of Mexico.

The two passed through 25 Corps-operated locks, including all 12 of the Rock Island District locks and dams. The McGrath brothers not only achieved their goal of skiing 1,819 miles in record time, but they did it to raise funds for the Leukemia-Lymphoma Society. The cause is especially close to Brenton, who battled and defeated life-threatening leukemia before setting the current world record for endurance water-skiing by skiing the length of Australia’s longest river, the 1,336.72 mile-long Murray River, in 1996.



Photo by Roger McElroy, lockmaster, Lock and Dam 21

Pete Schenck, a member of the brothers’ support team, Mississippi Challenge, said the Corps was critical to the success of what is now a Guinness Book achievement.

“The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and some incredible cooperation by the tow boat operators all up and down this portion of the river have enabled us to make the journey as close to on schedule as possible,” said Schenck.

Paul Ryan, Mississippi Challenge member, said it takes a tremendous amount of strength and endurance to be pulled, sometimes 50 miles without stopping, behind a 28-foot, twin 225-horsepower-engine ski boat averaging up to 60 miles per hour. 🏠

(Left) With Dam 22 and the Illinois shoreline in the background, team members from Mississippi Challenge lock through Lock 22 at Saverton, Mo.



Photo by Stephen McCann, lockmaster, Lock and Dam 22